Depletion of Forests in North-East

*25. SHRI PRAFULL GORADIA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have any scheme to stop depletion of forests, particularly in the North-East;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether Government are planning to have joint forest management schemes to ensure better involvement of the people?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) There are a number of Centrally Sponsored Schemes, which contribute to regeneration, protection and development of forests in the country including the North-Eastern States and thus help to stop the depletion of forests. The total outlay for the Ninth Plan for the Ministry is Rs. 3013.84 crore out of which Rs. 380.50 crore is for Forestry sector, Rs. 473.50 crore is for Wildlife Sector and Rs. 600 crore for National Afforestation and Eco-Development Board. It is proposed that from 2000-2001, 10% of the Ministry's budget will be earmarked for development activity in the North-Eastern States. Plantation of bamboos is being encouraged in various States particularly in North-Eastern States.

(c) As per the provisions of National Forest Policy, 1988, the Joint Forest Management programme is being implemented in the country. For this purpose, the Government of India has issued guidelines to the various State Governments on the 1st June, 1990. So far the Joint Forest Management resolutions have been adopted in 22 States covering 10.25 million ha. of forests being managed by 36075 Joint Forest Management Committees (JFMC) in the country under this programme. To further strengthen the JFM approach, Government of India have issued fresh guidelines to the States on the 21st February, 2000.